

# Innovation Fund to Honor Memory of Nuclear Medicine Pioneer Henry Wagner

FOR 56 YEARS, HENRY N. WAGNER, Jr., M.D. was a towering figure in nuclear medicine, radiology and public health at Hopkins—and around the world,” said Richard L. Wahl, M.D., who holds the Henry N. Wagner Jr., M.D., Professorship in Nuclear Medicine at Johns Hopkins and is Director of the Division of Nuclear Medicine/PET in the Russell H. Morgan Department of Radiology and Radiological Science.

Dr. Wagner was the first to use radioactive tracers for the rapid diagnosis of pulmonary embolism. He became his own research subject in 1983-84, undergoing positron emission tomography (PET) scans in order to study the living chemistry of the brain and make images of dopamine and opiate receptors. These landmark images enhanced understanding of the brain's physiology and pathophysiology, and paved the way for groundbreaking research in addiction and drug design. His applications of nuclear medicine to pulmonary and coronary artery disease also led to significant advances in the field.

Born in Baltimore, Dr. Wagner was a 1944 graduate of Calvert Hall High School. After spending 16 months in the United States Coast Guard Academy during World War II, he returned to Baltimore and received both his undergraduate and medical degrees from

Johns Hopkins in 1948 and 1952, respectively, earning Phi Beta Kappa and Alpha Omega Alpha honors. He served both his internship and residency at Johns Hopkins.

Following two years as a clinical associate at the National Institutes of Health and a year as a special postgraduate research fellow at Hammersmith Hospital in London, England, Dr. Wagner returned to Johns Hopkins as Chief Resident in Internal Medicine. He began his



Anne and Henry Wagner

career in nuclear medicine by joining the faculty in 1959 as an associate professor of medicine and radiology.

In 1964, Dr. Wagner accepted a joint appointment at what now is the Bloomberg School of Public Health and in 1967 became a full professor of radiology in the School of Medicine and a full professor of radiological science in the School of Public Health, as well as Director of the Division of Radiation Health Sciences at Public Health at Johns Hopkins. On his retirement in 1995, Dr. Wagner was named professor emeritus in both schools.

## Tribute in memory of Henry Wagner

If you would like to make a gift in memory of Henry Wagner, please consider a tax-deductible contribution payable to “The Wagner Fund for Innovation in Nuclear Medicine” and send to The Russell H. Morgan Department of Radiology and Radiological Science, Johns Hopkins Medicine, 100 North Charles Street, Suite 316, Baltimore, MD 21201. You may also contribute online at [www.hopkinsradiology.org](http://www.hopkinsradiology.org). Select “Ways of Giving” and then select “The Wagner Fund for Innovation in Nuclear Medicine” from the designation menu. If you would like to speak with someone about your donation, please contact the development office at 410-516-8986.

In 2009, Johns Hopkins honored Dr. Wagner with the School of Medicine Distinguished Medical Alumnus Award.

His contributions to nuclear medicine brought him numerous other honors and awards, including the Georg Charles de Hevesy Nuclear Pioneer Award in 1984, and the first Annual Society of Nuclear Medicine President's Award for outstanding contributions to nuclear medicine in 1993.

During more than a half-century of leadership in the field, Dr. Wagner trained more than 500 radiologists, internists, physicians and scientists, eight of whom went on to serve as president of the Society of Nuclear Medicine—a position Dr. Wagner held from 1970 to 1971. He also was president of the World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology from 1975 to 1978. A highly productive researcher and writer, Dr. Wagner was the author or co-author of more than 800 publications.

Dr. Wagner died of complications from heart disease on September 25, 2012, at the age of 85. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Anne Barrett Wagner; their children Nick Wagner, Randy Wagner Rixey, Mark Wagner, and Anne Wagner Speed; and nine grandchildren.

The Wagners enjoyed spending weekends at their home on the Chester River, where Dr. Wagner spent countless hours tending to trees and grapes on their property. For the past two decades, the Wagners divided their time between Maryland and Maui, where Dr. Wagner developed a reputation as a master tempura chef and an enthusiastic, if not masterful, participant in a local ukulele group. Dr. Wagner is fondly remembered as being brilliant, visionary, jovial, warm, generous, and gracious, with a proudly corny sense of humor that he freely shared with others. ■